

(Indicator 3) Collaborating with colleagues to review and interpret assessment data to monitor and adjust instruction to ensure students' progress.

Collaborates with colleagues to review and interpret assessment data in order to plan and adjust instruction and assessments to meet the needs of individuals and/or small groups.

**I will learn through collegial collaboration and feedback to identify strategies of instruction that will help adjust small group instruction, and as a result, students will improve their reading fluency and comprehension.**

#### Summary:

During my reading intervention with Tier 2 students, I have focused on reading fluency and comprehension. Informal assessment data has revealed that students have difficulty reading fluently as well as comprehending texts. My student's inability to read fluently directly contributes to the lack of comprehension that my students show. Their struggles in fluency make it difficult for them to read through an entire passage effectively. This also impedes their improvement in fluency and comprehension. The utilization of collegial collaboration will help me to identify strategies of instruction and assessment that will enable my students to become more successful in their reading fluency and comprehension.

During the second half of the school year, my goal was to research, collaborate and execute new, meaningful and effective strategies that will enable my students to become more successful in their reading fluency and comprehension. A pertinent source of my new learning was Data Wise by Kathryn Parker Boudett (2013). Chapter four has provided a new way to look at the process of data analysis to better inform and instruct ourselves and students. I identified ways to use assessments to deliver my instruction in a more meaningful and direct way. When reviewing Boudett's strategies, I reflected on the effectiveness of my assessments for my reading intervention students.

When reading chapter 4 in Data Wise, Boudett states, "By triangulating your findings from multiple data sources you will be able to identify your problem with more accuracy and specificity." (Boudett, 2013) When reflecting on the data sources that I have used during this school year, I realized that I was only using one assessment tool for my reading intervention group. The main assessment tool that I have used is the Oral Reading Fluency test which monitors the words per minute rate that my students are reading at. After reading chapter four in Boudett, I found that I need to have a few more viable sources for assessment of my students. Some alternative examples of informal assessments which I can use are portfolios and students conferences. Once I reviewed the previous assessments I immediately began to create revised assessments based on my student's needs.

During a meeting with our building based Literacy Coach, I found ways that I could take Boudett's "triangulation of data" and incorporate it into my reading intervention group. With this group I have primarily used the Oral Reading Fluency test. We discussed the use of the Degrees of Reading Power and Developmental Reading Assessments as alternate assessment tools. This discussion focused on the usage of these assessments to pinpoint areas of need for my students. I decided that using these three assessment tools will help me identify needs so I can help improve my student's reading fluency and comprehension. I have often struggled with being able to use all three of these assessments in a cohesive way to target the needs of my students. When I analyzed these assessments I was able to gain a much deeper knowledge of my student's capabilities.

As I administered these assessments I explained to them that these would be used to help monitor their fluency and comprehension progress. My students were initially hesitant and stated, "These are so boring" and "Why do we have to do all of this?" I clarified to my group that we were trying to create a

"triangle of data" so they could see the progress that they are making. I then created a chart that showed all three data points and explained to them how they all related to fluency and comprehension. This rubric showed the baseline data for a 5<sup>th</sup> grade student. I then put student's data in the chart to show them the deficiencies from the grade level scores. A student stated, "My scores are way lower than they should be." I explained that this data is used to help them set a goal and through daily group work, we will try to increase our scores. Several other students felt this way and when we identified gaps in their scores we began to create individual goals together during group. A student said, "I am going to raise my Developmental Reading Assessment score from a 34 to a 50 in six weeks." The students became aware of how the three assessments worked together and in the end it helped them monitor their progress. I explained to them that this was an achievable goal and with hard work and practice they should be able to reach their goal. The idea of goal setting became an important theme in my group and it enabled my students to set a measureable assessment goal in a short period of time.

A focus for my reading intervention was to be able to tie my assessment data and planning together to create lessons tailored to my individual student's needs. A common theme in Chapter three from Instructional Planning and Assessment by (McGraw-Hill, 2009) was "the importance of using diagnostic assessments to plan your instruction." I learned that in order to create meaningful lessons for all varying levels of students in my group, I must use assessment data to support all students. While my reading intervention focus is on fluency and comprehension, it is essential to come up with individualized plans that address each student's individual goals.

As I reflected on my previous use of assessments for planning in my group, I realized that I had not tailored goals to each student's needs. Formal assessments were the mainstay in my group and I did not deviate from them to make individual goals. As I looked more deeply into my student's Developmental Reading Assessment, I noticed that two students were reading at an appropriate fluency level. However, I did not look deeply at their comprehension. These two students were struggling with inferring the text during their reading. When I realized this, I came up with an intervention plan for these students that focused on inferring. An example of altering my planning through assessment was by creating the "inference hot seat" where one student was shown a word that described emotion. This student would act out the emotion, while the other student would have to infer as to what emotion was being shown. These students worked very closely with me on what it actually meant to infer while reading. As we worked on these strategies, these two students became more accustomed to ways of properly using these comprehension strategies. This strategy enabled me to use assessment data to alter my planning for more meaningful instruction.

During our weekly data team meetings my grade level has been focusing on developing instructional strategies for assessment in reading intervention. We all agreed that formal assessments are viable ways to triangulate data; however, we were looking for more informal ways to assess our students. One informal assessment strategy that we developed was to use conferencing with our students. This process enables us to check in with the students at various points of the lesson to see where they are in relation to their fluency and comprehension. The discussion that we had as a grade level was very beneficial in finding another "less formal" way to assess our students.

I began implementing this strategy on the third day of reading intervention. I explained to my students that we would begin to conference with each other about the progress that we have been making. I used these conversations as ways to collect reflective information that had not emerged through other formal assessments. This type of informal assessment has proven to be very beneficial to the assessment of students. When I conferenced with them we were able to discuss areas of success as well as areas that are in need of improvement. This was done in a one on one setting while other students are completing their assignments.

Initially, students were hesitant to conference with me. One student said, "I feel like you're judging me." I explained to this student that conferencing with them was a non-judgmental process. It was a way for the two of us to check in on their progress. Once I reassured the student that this was a positive process, he felt more comfortable with the situation. As we conferenced about the main idea behind the "Manta Ray"

text, it became clear to the student that he did not understand the text completely. The main idea of the text was that the manta ray is a large and docile animal. When discussing this with the student, I asked him, "Why do you think you missed the main idea of the article?" The student responded, "Because it was a difficult passage for me to read." He also stated, "I think I was focusing so much on being able to read it quickly, that I lost the meaning of the paragraph." We then came up with an active reading strategy of highlighting important ideas that will help identify the main idea of the story; which was very beneficial for the student. The use of conferencing enabled me to see that the student was too focused on reading the text appropriately; therefore, he lost the meaning of the passage. This was a critical step for me to delve more deeply into their understanding through a less formal assessment. This student was able to see that through conferencing we were able to identify an area of need, and target how we could improve this area.

When researching other various forms of assessment, I read the article, "Methods of Assessment" by William Badders (2000). In this article, Badders suggests, "using portfolios as an assessment tool in the classroom." (2000). I had never thought of using a portfolio as an assessment tool in my Tier 2 reading groups. As I reflected on this assessment tool, I found that it would be very beneficial to my students. This type of assessment is both formative and summative in relation to our group focus of fluency and comprehension. I would be able to integrate student work and student data into my group in a more formal assessment. During our six weeks of reading intervention I began thinking of ways to integrate this into my group.

During my Tier 2 intervention, our group had been reading non-fiction passages about exotic animals. Prior to giving the portfolio project to my students, they chose an exotic animal that they wanted to research. Students were given a passage on their animal and they completed a "cold read" which is when they read it for the first time without seeing it. Students then graphed their words per minute on a data chart for the group. Once students did this, I created a rubric that outlined all of the necessary components of the portfolio. The components of the rubric were to research one exotic animal that we had read about. They were to create a one page document in the expository format that identified the habitat of animals, interesting facts of the animals as well as their opinion of why they wrote about this animal. Another component of this assessment was that students were also responsible for reading their passage fluently to our group. In our group we called this a "hot read" which meant they had read their passage several times and were familiar with the text. After reading, students recorded their words per minute on our data chart. This assessment gave me the ability to measure student's comprehension of their exotic animal, as well as their improvement in fluency from their "cold read" to a "hot read". Both of these formative and summative assessments helped me gain detailed information about my students.

The idea of creating a portfolio about an exotic animal was very popular with my group. Students were very excited to read and conduct research about their animal, as well as share with the group how much they had improved on their fluency. After my group conducted their "cold reads" they recorded their data. This was a pivotal point in this project because one student said, "I didn't do the best on my cold read, but after I practice and do some research, I know I'm going to improve that score." This showed that this student was very determined in working on her fluency rate. She wanted to "Do better to show the group how hard I worked." Several other students felt this way as well, and set personal goals for themselves during the project. As the project unfolded, the students were very focused on researching and writing about their animal. Students even asked for more time during Tier 1 reading to work on their project. The fact that the interest level was so high for these students attributed greatly to the success that they showed. The student that set a goal of "Improving that score" did indeed improve. She increased her fluency from 98 words per minute, to 125 words per minute. She was ecstatic in the improvement that she made. All members of the group were able to improve their words per minute by an average of 15 or more words. In addition to fluency, students were able to create well researched, thought out and detailed expository essays that showed they comprehended their text. When I asked my students if they wanted to do a similar project, they were all very excited about doing it in the future.

As I look back on the collegial collaboration and research that I have done in regards to adjustment of teaching to ensure student's success I see that I have found many forms of assessment that are

beneficial to student success. My new learning from Boudett's Data Wise has shown me that when I triangulate my student's data, I will be able to more accurately identify student's needs in regards to Tier 2 instruction. The baseline data that I gathered from Oral Reading Fluency, Degrees of Reading Power and Developmental Reading Assessments gave me lots of crucial information that I then used to tailor my instruction to ensure that students would succeed. It was a key step for me to assess my students in this manner so I could properly address their needs.

In addition to Boudett's readings, Methods of Assessment and Instructional Planning and Assessment provided me with other vital assessment tools that helped me bring my research in assessments full circle. The use of portfolios as a formative and summative assessment for my Tier 2 students gave my group a high interest project that spanned several curricular areas. I found that the creation of a well-developed, student needs based assessment gave me lots of beneficial data. The combination of diagnostic data and portfolios helped me guide my instruction. I was able to see how much my students improved their reading fluency, as well as their ability to synthesize and comprehend non-fiction texts. This was a very constructive assessment for collecting and analyzing student data in regards to the progress in their academic needs.

One of the most beneficial pieces of information came from the collegial collaboration with my grade level team during weekly data team meetings. Through our data team process we worked together to develop many different forms of assessment that were both formal and informal. The strategy that I found the most beneficial was the use of conferencing with each student. The few minutes that we spent discussing progress on a weekly basis gave me a feel of where the students were in regards to their fluency and comprehension. The students respected each other's conferencing time and were able to use this as a learning opportunity. The conferences enabled the students and I an opportunity to discuss what they needed to improve.

As I reflect on the use of assessments in my Tier 2 instruction I have found that various forms are needed to gather data about my students. I have broadened my assessment techniques from a district baseline to a more conceptual and skill based format. The implementation of varied assessments has helped me gain more valuable information about my students. It has helped me develop a more meaningful understanding of what my students know and understand. In the future, I plan on continuing the implementation of various assessments that are beneficial to my students and me so I can identify areas of instruction that need to be targeted.